



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Wednesday - March 26, 2003**

- ***In the West***, precipitation is overspreading the ***northwestern half of the region***, providing another late-season boost in valley soil-moisture reserves and high-elevation snow packs. Nevertheless, ***Western*** water-supply concerns persist due to the combination of already low reservoir levels and prospects for below-normal spring and summer runoff.
- ***On the Plains***, warm, dry weather and recent soil moisture improvements continue to promote rapid winter wheat development across the ***southeastern half of the region***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, mild, dry weather favors pre-planting fieldwork, although moisture reserves remain very limited, especially along and north of a line from ***northern Missouri to Lower Michigan***.
- ***In the South***, scattered showers and thunderstorms are sweeping across the region, causing renewed fieldwork delays. However, initial corn, soybean, rice, and cotton planting operations had accelerated in recent days across the ***Deep South***, especially from the ***western Gulf Coast region to the Delta***.

**Outlook:** A cold front will bring cooler weather and a chance of showers to the ***Atlantic Coast and Southeastern States***, while rain and late-season snows will accompany a developing storm system in the ***central and northern Rockies and Great Plains***. Meanwhile, a persistent onshore flow will sustain periods of light rain and snow in the ***Pacific Northwest***, while dry but cooler weather will prevail in the ***Southwest***. By week's end, rain and snow will shift into the ***Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes States***, while periods of rain may linger in the ***Southeast***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for March 31 - April 4 features surplus precipitation in the ***Pacific Northwest, northern Rockies, northern Plains, upper Mississippi Valley, and New England***, while drier-than-normal conditions are forecast across the ***southern Plains, Delta, and Southeast***. Above-normal temperatures are expected in the ***Southwest and Great Basin***, while below-normal temperatures are forecast for the ***northern tier of the Nation*** and along the ***East Coast***.

***Contact:*** Mark Brusberg, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-3508)